AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) An object based interface for an industrial control system comprising:

a server program receiving communications from a client program employing a standard object protocol;

a set of software objects including at least two third-party objects having differing proprietary object protocols also differing from the standard object protocol; and

at least two object providers each communicating with the server program and one proprietary object to translate between standard object protocol and an associated one of the proprietary object protocols, wherein an interceptor monitors communications between the server program and the object providers and performs at least one of verifying license validity and recording a fee for use of an object;

whereby objects from multiple vendors may be simply utilized by [[a]] the client program.

2. (Previously presented) The object based interface of claim 1 wherein the standard object protocol controls object features selected from the group consisting of: object creation, object destruction, setting parameters of the objects, invoking methods of the objects, subscribing to events of objects, and canceling event subscriptions.

3. (Previously presented) The object based interface of claim 1 wherein the proprietary object protocol controls object features selected from the group consisting of: object creation, object destruction, setting parameters of the objects, invoking methods of the objects, subscribing to events of objects, and canceling event subscriptions.

4. (Previously presented) The object based interface of claim 1 wherein the standard object protocol includes discovery instructions and wherein the object providers respond to the discovery instructions by identifying object features of software objects with which they are associated.

5. (Previously presented) The object based interface of claim 4 wherein the object features identified are selected from the group consisting of: parameters of the objects, the methods of the objects, and events of the object.

6. (Original) The object based interface of claim 4 wherein the client program communicates with the server program over a network the object providers expose proprietary objects that are associated with a URL.

7. (Previously presented) The object-based interface of claim 4 wherein the object providers are software objects that provide encapsulation of data passed to proprietary software objects.

8. (Previously presented) The object based interface of claim 1 wherein proprietary software objects are selected from the group consisting of Java, Com, C++, XML, and Visual Basic objects.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Canceled)

11. (Original) The object based interface of claim 1 further including an asserter communicating with the object providers and the proprietary software objects executing a predetermined program in response to such communications.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Original) The object based interface of claim 1 including an Internet interface and wherein the client program communicates with the server program through the Internet interface.

14. (Original) The object based interface of claim 1 wherein the client program is a Java applet.

15. (Original) The object based interface of claim 1 wherein the software objects include graphic display elements.

16. (Previously presented) The object based interface of claim 1 wherein the software objects include graphic control elements.

17. (Currently amended) A method for communicating with an industrial control system comprising:

(a) receiving at a server program, standard object protocol communications from a client program;

(b) translating by means of an object provider between the standard object protocol communications and at least one proprietary object protocol associated with proprietary software objects including at least two third-party objects having differing proprietary object protocols also differing from the standard object protocol, wherein an interceptor monitors communications between the server program and the object provider and executes a predetermined program in response to such communications;

whereby objects from multiple vendors may be simply utilized by [[a]] the client program.

18. (Previously presented) The method of claim 17 wherein the standard object protocol controls object features selected from the group consisting of: object creation, object destruction, setting parameters of the objects, invoking methods of the objects, subscribing to events of objects, and canceling event subscriptions.

19. (Previously presented) The method of claim 17 wherein the proprietary object protocol controls object features selected from the group consisting of: object creation, object destruction, setting parameters of the objects, invoking methods of the objects, subscribing to events of objects, and canceling event subscriptions.

20. (Previously presented) The method of claim 17 wherein the standard object protocol includes discovery instructions and wherein the object providers respond to the discovery instructions by identifying object features of software objects with which they are associated.

21. (Previously presented) The method of claim 20 wherein the object features identified are selected from the group consisting of: parameters of the objects, methods of the objects, and events of the objects.

22. (Original) The method of claim 20 wherein the client program communicates with the server program over a network and the object providers expose proprietary objects that are associated with a URL.

23. (Original) The method of claim 20 wherein the object providers expose a common software interface that provides an abstraction of the underlying proprietary software object interface.

24. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein the proprietary software objects are selected from the group consisting of Java objects, XML objects, COM, C++, and Visual Basic objects.

25. (Canceled)

26. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[25]] 17 wherein the predetermined program performs at least one of the tasks of verifying license validity and recording a fee for use of the object.

27. (Original) The method of claim 17 further including communicating between the object providers and an assertor program executing a predetermined program in response to such communications.

28. (Canceled)

29. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein the client program communicates with the server program through the Internet.

30. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein the client program is a Java applet.

31. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein the software objects include graphic display elements.

32. (Previously presented) The method of claim 17 wherein the software objects include graphic control elements.